

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRIDGE 01015 141519Z

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ACTION EB-11

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CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSC-07

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O R 132210Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE NIACT 7304

INFO AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRIDGETOWN 1015

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRN BB

SUBJ: CIVAIR: AMBASSADOR CONFERS WITH GOB RE ROUTE RESTRICTIONS

REF: (A) STATE 121119, (B) STATE 124562

1. AMBASSADOR, ACCOMPANIED BY ECONOMIC OFFICER, MET WITH FORDE AFTERNOON JUNE 13. SHE MADE ORAL POINTS PER INSTRUCTIONS AND PROVIDED AIDE-MEMOIRE PER REFTEL (INCLUDING REFERENCE TO GOTT CONCERN ABOUT US ROUTES FOR BARBADOS). AMBASSADOR EMPHASIZED US DESIRE TO AVOID COLLISION AND TO MAINTAIN MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL ROUTE STRUCTURE, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF DISTURBED SITUATION OF US AIRLINES, NECESSITY FOR SWAPS, ETC.

2. FORDE RESPONDED BY EMPHASIZING TWO FACTORS IN BARBADOS DECISIONS: (A) DISPARITY OF VALUE OF ROUTES PROPOSED BY US COMPARED WITH AUTHORITY PRESENTLY ENJOYED BY US CARRIERS. HE SAID TWO DELEGATIONS DID NOT AGREE (OR EVEN DISCUSS IN DEPTH) MATTER OF VALUES IN MAY TALKS, BUT THERE WAS NO QUESTION VASTLY GREATER VALUE OF THREE ROUTES ENJOYED BY US COMPARED TO THE ONE INTERIM ROUTE (EVEN WITH BAHAMAS) OFFERED TO BARBADOS; (B) FACT THAT ROUTE GRANT WOULD NOT PREJUDICE MY FINAL AGREEMENT. FORDE SAID THAT BARBADOS HAD CONCLUDED THAT IT WOULD HAVE TO ACCEPT AN
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PAGE 02 BRIDGE 01015 141519Z

INTERIM AGREEMENT WITHOUT BAHAMAS STOP BUT, IF IT DID SO, GOB

DID NOT FEEL THAT IT COULD CONTINUE TO TAKE "SHORT END OF STICK." HENCE GOB WISHED TO "TRUNCATE" PRESENT US ROUTES TO MAKE SITUATION MORE NEARLY EQUAL OR AT LEAST NOT QUITE AS UNBALANCED IN US' FAVOR. FORDE CONTENDED THAT PROPOSED GOB ACTION WAS "HARDLY OUT OF BLUE" IN VIEW OF FAILURE TO REACH AGREEMENT IN MAY NEGOTIATIONS.

3. FORDE THEN POINTED OUT THAT GOB POSITION WAS NOT BASED SOLELY ON MATTERS OF FINANCIAL RETURN OR NUMBERS OF TOURISTS. HE SAID BARBADOS' SELF-ESTEEM AND SELF RESPECT PLAYED GREAT PART IN GOB DECISION TO EQUALIZE THE ODDS IN CIVAIR ARRANGEMENTS. REVIEWING BRIEFLY HISTORY OF US-BARBADOS CIVAIR PROBLEMS ESPECIALLY THE TWO YEARS WE REFUSED TO TALK TO THEM AT ALL, FORDE MAINTAINED THAT BARBADOS HAD MADE GREAT EFFORT EVER SINCE THE '72 AGREEMENT TO OBTAIN FAIR DEAL BUT HAD MET RESISTANCE FROM US SO NOW BACK WHERE THEY STARTED. HAD HAD GREAT HOPES INTERIM ROUTE MATTERS COULD HAVE BEEN SETTLED IN MAY. PRESENT ACTION MOTIVATED BY FACT THAT GOB CAN NO LONGER ACCEPT COMBINATION OF PRESENT LOPSIDED ARRANGEMENT.

4. FORDE SAID HE WOULD CONVEY US POSITION TO PRIME MINISTER HOPEFULLY BEFORE LATTER DEPARTS FOR BAHAMAS JUNE 14. BARROW EXPECTED BE GONE ABOUT A WEEK.

5. COMMENT: OUR IMPRESSION WAS THAT BARBADOS FEELING OF REJECTION, (EVEN IF UNJUSTIFIED) AND PSYCHOLOGICAL NEED FOR SELF ASSERTION IS PLAYING AS GREAT A PART AS ECONOMICS IN MOTIVATING GOB. OBVIOUSLY UNTIL WE HAVE BARROW'S REACTION WE ARE NOT ABLE TO GAUGE WHETHER OR HOW COLLISION CAN BE AVERTED.
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